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Professor Thomas C. Schelling
Center for International Affairs
Harvard University
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

Dear Tom:

Some time soon? No. (I wish I could supply you a vague answer, but it wouldn't be honest.)

You left Washington too soon, as I warned you. However, even in your absence the validation of a flock of Schelling conjectures on crisis phenomena was too obvious to pass unnoticed: for example, the spontaneous generation of arms control proposals at the height of the crisis (and the lack of preparations to implement any such proposal), a sudden interest in signalling-strategies and viable limits, the unanticipated plausibility of limited U.S. initiatives and Soviet responses that would previously have been "unthinkable," and the problems encountered by a participant wishing to demonstrate his compliance with an imposed "arms control agreement," among many others. In fact, the whole character of the crisis had a familiar Schelling flavor, in terms of information and the sequence of alternatives, as was frequently remarked by those who had participated in one of your games.

As Harry recalls his reaction to the dispatch that English students were rioting in front of the U.S. Embassy in London: "Ah, that control team is busy again." At another meeting, there was general agreement on the striking similarity in atmosphere and structure between the crisis as it was developing and a Schelling scenario. I commented that this certainly demonstrated the realism of Schelling's games, to which Rostow added: "Or else it demonstrates the unrealism of this crisis."

Yours,

Daniel Ellsberg